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GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

MICHAEL P. FLANAGAN
SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

July 23, 2012

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Michael P. Flanagan, Chairman

SUBJECT: Approval of Criteria for Section 32p Early Childhood Block Grant

Section 32p of the State School Aid Act for fiscal year (FY) 2012-2013 combines two former programs for which Intermediate School Districts (ISDs) or consortia of Intermediate School Districts provided fiscal oversight and programming: the Great Start Collaboratives and Great Start Parent Coalitions, as well as Great Parents, Great Start. The two funding streams and activities are combined into a single block grant to ISDs as the fiscal agents for both initiatives. For FY 2012-2013, legislation provides continuation funding for these efforts. This is the second step in consolidating early childhood funding to promote better systemic efforts at both the state and local levels. The first step last year was to move local management of the Great Start Readiness Program from more than 500 local districts and agencies to the ISDs.

Great Start Collaboratives and Great Start Parent Coalitions have been operating statewide since 2006 with direction and support from the Early Childhood Investment Corporation. The new legislative language for FY 2012-2013 moves oversight to the Office of Great Start. Each Collaborative and Parent Coalition work together to build and reform the local early childhood system to achieve better outcomes for young children and their families, ultimately ensuring children are ready to succeed in school and in life. Great Start Collaboratives convene and facilitate the planning and implementation of locally determined early childhood system-focused priorities, with a particular focus on ensuring that coordination occurs across early childhood programs and services. A Great Start Collaborative consists of community leaders from both the public and private sector and includes parents of young children. Great Start Parent Coalitions are composed of parents who volunteer their time to educate their community and policymakers about the importance of early childhood investment and also bring system concerns and barriers to the Great Start Collaborative for resolution.

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ISDs have been providing parenting education and involvement opportunities for families with children birth to five years of age for more than a decade. Since 2003, Great Parents, Great Start program grants have required wide dissemination of parenting information across the community, and also intensive services for a targeted group of children and families. These services may include play groups, home visits, and other targeted parenting or parent and child activities.

It is recommended that the State Board of Education approve Criteria for Section 32p Early Childhood Block Grant as attached to the Superintendent's memorandum dated July 23, 2012.

MICHIGAN
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Criteria for Section 32p Early Childhood Block Grant

The State Board of Education has adopted as its goal “Continue developing an effective and equitable performance-based system that achieves academic growth and successful outcomes for all students.”

To the extent possible, all grant criteria and grant awards will serve to further attain the above goal.

PRIORITIES, POLICIES, AND PROGRAMS THAT THESE CRITERIA SUPPORT

Section 32p of the State School Aid Act for FY 2012-2013 combines two former programs for which Intermediate School Districts (ISDs) or consortia of Intermediate School Districts provided fiscal oversight and programming: the Great Start Collaboratives (GSC) and Great Start Parent Coalitions (GSPC), as well as Great Parents, Great Start (GP, GS). The two funding streams and activities are combined into a single block grant to ISDs as the fiscal agents for both initiatives. For 2012-2013, legislation provides continuation funding for these efforts. This is the second step in consolidating early childhood funding to promote better systemic efforts at both the state and local levels. The first step last year was to move local management of the Great Start Readiness Program from more than 500 local districts and agencies to the ISDs.

Great Start Collaboratives and Great Start Parent Coalitions

This initiative supports the SBE’s priority to “Support the consolidation of early childhood education and care programs and resources into a single office of Early Childhood Education and Care, and continue to advocate for enhanced early childhood opportunities.” Highly effective GSCs and GSPCs work together to build and reform the local early childhood system to achieve better outcomes for young children and their families, ultimately ensuring children are ready to succeed in school and in life. Great Start Collaboratives convene and facilitate the planning and implementation of locally determined early childhood system-focused priorities, with a particular focus on ensuring that coordination occurs across early childhood programs and services. A Great Start Collaborative consists of community leaders from both the public and private sector and includes parents of young children. Great Start Parent Coalitions are composed of parents who volunteer their time to educate their community and policymakers about the importance of early childhood investment and also bring system concerns and barriers to the Great Start Collaborative for resolution.

Great Parents, Great Start

The State Board of Education’s focus on student achievement requires re-thinking the educational system in Michigan. Programs that begin with parenting education and services to very young children can prevent and minimize the achievement gap that impacts many of Michigan’s children. Parenting education and

involvement opportunities for families with children birth to five years of age residing within intermediate school districts across Michigan have been the focus of each of the funding streams since 2001.

The GP, GS program grants are designed to provide informational services for all families with young children who wish to participate. Experience has shown that this approach has reached numerous at-risk families who previously hadn't been identified for services and assisted these young families with positive parenting skills. Approximately half of all families served have been low income. GP, GS grantees also design intensive services for a targeted group of children and families. These services may include play groups, home visits, and other targeted parenting or parent and child activities.

GP, GS services are developed so they align with, and are part of the broader local early childhood community collaborative plan. Many benefits have been gained from strengthening the coordination and collaboration between schools and communities.

PURPOSE / BACKGROUND OF GRANT

☐ Competitive X Formula ☐ New X Continuation

The purpose of the Section 32p Early Childhood Block Grant is to ensure local coordination and expansion of infrastructure and programming to support high-quality early childhood and child care programs. The ultimate purpose of all funding is to promote the readiness of all children for success in kindergarten, in school, and in their lives.

CRITERIA

Date criteria were last approved

- Great Start Collaboratives and Great Start Parent Coalitions: New
- Great Parents, Great Start: 6/15/2010

x Defined in Statute ☐ Defined in Department's Approved Grant Application to the Funder x Proposed by Staff

Great Start Collaboratives and Great Start Parent Coalitions

Great Start Collaboratives and Great Start Parent Coalitions have been operating statewide since 2006 with direction and support from the Early Childhood Investment Corporation. The new legislative language for FY 2012-2013 moves oversight from the Early Childhood Investment Corporation to the Michigan Department of Education (MDE), Office of Great Start. Each Intermediate School District or Consortium of Intermediate School Districts that receives funding must:

- convene a local Great Start Collaborative and a Parent Coalition to address the availability of the six components of the Great Start system in its community, including physical health, social-emotional health, family

supports, basic needs, economic stability and safety, and parenting education and early education and care;*

- ensure the coordination and expansion of infrastructure and programming to support high-quality early childhood and child care programs;*
- forward its approved strategic plan, including activities and initiatives to be accomplished;**
- support a 1.0 FTE Director for each GSC and an at least .50 FTE Convener (who is a parent) for each GSPC;**
- provide additional supports necessary for local staff and supports for parents, such as reimbursement for travel, child care expenses and honoraria to ensure sufficient parent participation in each Great Start Collaborative's planning and implementation efforts;**
- use funds to support projects identified by the Great Start Collaborative's strategic plan to improve and reform the early childhood system to be more effective, efficient, and better serve families and young children;**
- use funds to support ongoing evaluation and training and technical assistance;** and
- report to the department on activities actually provided and children and families served.*

Great Parents, Great Start

Each Intermediate School District or Consortium of Intermediate School Districts that receives funding shall maintain or expand parenting education and involvement programs designed to improve school readiness and foster the maintenance of stable families by encouraging positive parenting skills. Projects shall:

- demonstrate adequate collaboration with local entities involved in providing programs and services to children, birth to five years of age, and their parents;*
- develop Great Parents, Great Start services so they align with, and are part of the broader local early childhood community collaborative plan;*
- provide services to all parents with children age five or younger residing in the intermediate school district who choose to participate;*
- provide a program that includes at least all of the following service components for parents:**
 - information on the development of children from birth to age five, and examples of learning opportunities that promote their development.
 - methods to enhance parent-child interaction to promote comprehensive development of infants and toddlers.
 - promotion of access to needed community services through a community-school-home partnership.
- scale parent services and intervention efforts to reflect the level of family risk by providing:**
 - low intensity, universally available services to any interested family with children birth to five years of age, such as newsletters, book distributions, web-based resources, etc.
 - higher, more intensive face-to-face services, such as home visiting, play groups, etc., to families of higher risk.

- direct the majority of parent education and involvement services to families with children younger than four years of age;**
- provide connections to quality preschool programs for families who have children three and four years of age;*
- utilize current validated research-based methods and curriculum that match the populations with whom the district will be providing program components, including utilizing only evidence-based models for home visiting programs;**
- assure that staff providing parenting services possess proper early childhood training, including but not limited to academic credit in child development, early childhood education or equivalent or certification as a parent educator/home visitor focusing on parents of children birth to five years of age;**
- provide a cost-effective budget with no more than 10 percent administrative cost;** and
- participate in a department-approved data collection and evaluation system, including use of selected data collection instruments.*

*Criteria Defined in Statute

**Criteria Defined by Staff

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS/TARGET POPULATION TO BE SERVED BY GRANT

Intermediate School Districts or consortia of Intermediate School Districts will be offered funding as specified by the statute, to continue funding and services as under former sections 32b and 32j of the State School Aid Act, Public Act 62 of 2011, as in effect for FY 2011-2012. The target population for Great Parents, Great Start programming is all families with children age five or younger who choose to participate.

TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE

\$10,900,000: \$5,900,000 for Great Start Collaboratives and Great Start Parent Coalitions, and \$5,000,000 for Great Parents, Great Start.

STATUTE

Section 32(p) of the State School Aid Act, Public Act 201 of 2012.

OFFICE ADMINISTERING GRANT/PROGRAM CONTACT

Office of Great Start

Susan Broman, Deputy Superintendent

Lindy Buch, Director, Early Childhood Education and Family and Family Services

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